DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 365 659 SP 034 952

AUTHOR Barber, David
TITLE Why Teachers Choose To Work in Catholic Schools.
PUB DATE [92]
NOTE 20p.
PUB TYPE Information Analyses (070) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Career Choice; *Catholic Educators; *Catholic Schools; Classroom Environment; Elementary School Teachers; Elementary Secondary Education; Lay Teachers; Literature Reviews; Questionnaires; *Religious Factors; Secondary School Teachers; *Teacher Attitudes; *Teacher Employment; *Teaching (Occupation)

ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to determine the reasons why teachers choose to work in Catholic schools. The Catholic School Teachers Professional Choices Questionnaire was sent to 65 teachers and administrators in 4 Chicago Catholic elementary schools and 1 Catholic high school. Fifty-four completed questionnaires were returned by 49 teachers and 5 principals (83 percent response). The questionnaire was divided into two main sections. The first section gathered demographic data; the second section was divided into categories relating to religious, professional, experiential, and practical reasons for choosing to teach in Catholic schools. By dividing the population into three groups--religious, Catholic lay, and non-Catholic--different emphases were placed upon the categories of questions. Consistent with previous research, respondents ascribed greatest importance to teaching as a profession, suggesting that the nature of a Catholic school provides an environment in which personal faith issues can be developed and one which is efficacious to classroom goals. The study not only determined reasons that teachers chose to work in Catholic schools but also why they did not so choose--the most significant being notoriously low salary and benefits. Responses to the questionnaire and a 25-item bibliography are included. (LL)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

D Barber

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Why Teachers Choose To Work In Catholic Schools

David Barber

ED 365 659

Catholic schools have survived their declining enrollments and a deficit of religious teachers. Despite this apparent decay, the Catholic system remains a vital alternative to the public system. Rumors of a voucher system which would enable parents to receive federal funding for tuition, is a testament to the state of both systems. The schools appear to be in a serious state of deterioration with cutbacks and inefficiency which has brought some systems to bankruptcy, as well as educational standards that appear to be falling. Amidst the turmoil of public education, Catholic school continue to be effective institutions with committed staff and academic results which consistently exceed the public schools. This success is attained despite societal problems which haunt and hinder all education. Catholic schools in the inner cities cater to the same populations that attend their public school counterparts. What makes the Catholic system apparently more effective, efficient and successful should be of primary concern to the public schools. By acknowledging some of the reasons for this success may be prudent if they can be applied elsewhere. This is not a condemnation of one system or another. However, by assisting teachers to understand their role in, and their role of, the Catholic school, it may be possible to apply some of the same motivating forces that will enhance commitment, satisfaction and results.

Catholic schools are distinguished from other educational systems by a dual role; integrating academic achievement with spiritual growth. According to the Declaration on Christian Education published by the Second Vatican Council, "The Catholic school pursues cultural goals and the natural development of youth to the same degree as any other school. What makes the Catholic school distinctive is its attempt to generate a community climate in the school that is permeated by the Gospel spirit of freedom and love." The teacher's role within the schools is defined by the Vatican document, 'The Catholic School.' "By their witness and their behavior, teachers are of the first importance to impart a distinctive character to Catholic Schools."

By its nature, religion is fundamental in the formation of a Catholic School education. Academics and spirituality appear to be the overriding themes that must be cohesively joined for a complete education. "...we must strive to embody in ourselves and express in our curriculum the vision of an authentically Catholic Christianity" (O'Brien, 1986).

The teacher body composition is changing. Major studies generally have divided Catholic school teachers into three groups: Religious, Catholic lay and Non-Catholic. According to Brigham (1989, 1990) the percentage of

SP 034952

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

lay teachers in Catholic schools has increased dramatically over the past three decades. The average full-time lay faculty for elementary and secondary schools was 26.2% in 1960. This had risen to 51.5% by 1970, 73% in 1980 and 85.3% in 1990. Robert J. Kealey (1990) suggests a figure over 95% for 1990 and Lois King Draina (1984) proposes that by 1995, most Catholic school faculties will be entirely lay.

This increase was the result of the need to meet the demands of swelling school enrollments in the 1950's and 1960's (Brigham,1989,1990) but also to compensate for the decline of the religious teachers during the same period. (Brigham, 1989, 1990) However, 66% of principals in 1990 continued to be priests or members of a religious community (Guerra & Donahue, 1990).

Of the laity that makes up the teaching body, the majority continues to be female. The ratio of female to male teachers in Catholic schools typically ranges from between three and four women to every man although the ratio is considerably greater in elementary school (Neuwien, 1966 and Snyder, 1989) than high schools. (Carroll, 1985) The overall ratio is also greater in comparison to that of public schools where women hold two out of every three teaching positions (Guerra, 1992).

Two thirds of all teachers in Catholic high schools are in the 24 - 44 age range. This makes them younger, in general, than their public school counterparts (Benson & Guerra, 1985).

Racially, Catholic teaching bodies are not as diverse as public schools. In 1986, 93.5% of all Catholic school teachers and 89.6% of public school teachers were white (Snyder, 1989). Of the 7,022 teachers in the Chicago Archdiocese, for example, 9% are members of minority groups (Ozar, 1990).

Professionally, 97% of all Catholic school teachers held at least a bachelor's degree by 1986 (Snyder, 1989). Possession of a graduate degree was much more likely for Catholic secondary school teachers than for their elementary school colleagues. At the public school level, secondary teachers were as likely to hold a graduate degree as their Catholic counterparts but much more likely at the elementary level (Carroll, 1985; Greeley, 1985; McMillen, 1990; Yeager et al., 1985; Snyder, 1989). Guerra also proposes that more than half of all Catholic high school teachers have had some experience in the public school system.

Given certain commonly shared demographic patterns, our focus must turn to the question of whether there are certain commonly shared reasons for choosing to teach in a Catholic school. What is it that draws teachers to a system in which compensation has been consistently lower than for public schools? Financial reward, as might be expected, ranks very low as a reason for choosing the Catholic system. According to Guerra in his 1985 report, salary and benefits as a reason ranked 11th out of twelve reasons in order of priority. Indeed, other studies have shown that teacher dissatisfaction with low salaries and poor benefits is widespread (Benson et al., 1986; Bryk et al., 1984). At the Catholic elementary level, salaries appear to be between 40 -

45% less than for public school teachers and between 25 - 30% less for secondary school teachers (Bryk et al., 1984; Guerra & Donahue, 1990). Benson and McMillen (1991) reported that the average base salary for a Catholic school teacher was $14,036 in 1985-1986 while for public school teachers it was $24,335, a discrepancy of 42%. This could account for the relatively high turnover that the Catholic school system appears to have amongst its teaching staff. While not specifically targeted at Catholic schools, Olge, Alsalam, and Rogers' (1991) report showed that between 1986 and 1987, the rate of private school teachers leaving the profession was 8%. The rate for public school teachers in the same period was 4%. This figure appears to hold true for Catholic schools as well as for private. Lorraine Ozar (1990) reported that the Chicago Archdiocese averages a teacher turnover rate of 8 - 10%. However, research shows that teacher dissatisfaction is not due in large part to salary issues. Ernest L. Boyer (1983) reported that while teachers are very concerned about their compensation, they are also deeply troubled by "...their loss of status, the bureaucratic pressures, a negative public image, the lack of recognition and rewards." Indeed, even more recent research has suggested that teachers' salaries are practically unrelated to levels of satisfaction (Lee et al., 1991).

Major studies (Benson & Guerra , 1985, and Ciriello, 1988) reveal that the two reasons most teachers work in Catholic schools are religious and the educational environment. If we break down Catholic school teachers into three groups: Religious, Catholic lay and non-Catholic, we find a varied emphasis on these reasons. According to Benson and Guerra (1985) the number one reason for lay teachers is the desire to teach in the kind of educational environment that these schools provide. In a prioritized list, 39% of Catholic laity and 35% of non-Catholics rank this as paramount. Their second reason is a love of teaching. For Catholic lay teachers, the third and fourth reasons are religious ones while for non-Catholics, practical reasons take these in order. For religious teachers religious reasons assume the 3rd, 4th, and 5th choices in priority.

Reasons.	All Teachers	Catholic Laity	non-Catholic	Religious
Religious	Ranking of twelve reasons in order of importance			
God's choice for my life	4	4	5	2
View of teaching as ministry	3	3	6	1
Opportunity to witness my faith	5	5	9	3
Opportunity to be a part of a faith community	7	7	7	6
Educational				

Desire to teach in this kind of educational environment	1	1	1	5
Love of teaching	2	2	2	4
Experiential				
My own experiences during adolescence	10	10	8	7
Influences of a teacher I have had	9	9	11	8
Practical				
Means of gaining experience for future opportunities	8	8	4	9
Only teaching position available	6	6	3	-1
Salary and Benefits	11	11	10	-2

In Benson's study (1986) the primary educational goals of Catholic school teachers were spiritual development, "High moral standards / Citizenship" and "Critical Thinking" by religious, Catholic lay and non-Catholics respectively. McMillen (1988) drew a comparison between Catholic and Public school teachers. Forty one percent of Catholic school teachers placed more emphasis on "moral or religious values" compared with 10% of public school teachers.

What becomes apparent is that religion seems to a be a broadly defined term covering topics that include the promotion of tolerance, compassion and self-concept to peace and justice issues and also the more traditional religious teachings that cover knowledge of Catholic doctrine and the bible (Benson & Guerra, 1985). While a commitment to mission is a motivating force in teachers' decisions to work in a Catholic school, the degree of commitment to these aspects of religion varies amongst our three groups. Religious teachers place a much greater emphasis on those aspects of religion that cover the more traditional nature of church teachings; scripture, doctrine, etc. Sixty eight percent of religious teachers indicated that a major emphasis should be placed on "knowledge of Catholic doctrine" compared to 51% of Catholic laity and 35% of non-Catholics. Similarly, 64% of religious teachers believe "a clear understanding of the bible" should receive major emphasis compared with 42% of the Catholic laity and 49% of non-Catholics (Benson and Guerra, 1985).

Lay Catholic teachers were more inclined to define the importance of religious teachings to those aspects that covered morality, values and compassion although they stressed characteristics that referred to faith and doctrine more than non-Catholic teachers. "A vibrant, mature religious faith" was given a major emphasis rating by 67% of Catholic laity compared to 54% of non-Catholics.

In Ciriello's report (1990) the faith dimension as a reason to work in Catholic schools ranked very high. "A desire to help children develop faith," for example, received a 3.24 mean on a four point Likert scale with four as very important.

Kraushaar's study (1972) revealed that 76% of teachers selected the school's religious atmosphere as either important or very important as a reason they chose to work in a Catholic school. This high percentage might be considered less representative now since the number of religious teachers has greatly declined since the time of the study. However, Benson and Guerra (1985) suggest that a sense of ministry and commitment to Catholic education has, in fact, become intensified among the lay teachers in spite of, and possibly because of, the declining religious faculty.

All of the major studies seem to point to the fact that the majority of teachers at the elementary and high school level are working in Catholic schools largely because of the presence of a faith community. Ciriello (1990) claims that religion is important to the lives of these teachers regardless of their formal affiliation. Guerra (1985) claims that Catholic school teachers are generally more active in church activities than the American public in general or American Catholics. Eighty nine percent claim church membership, 72% attend church weekly and 51% actively participate in church affairs beyond simply attending. The religious nature provides an atmosphere where teachers' values are nurtured while they are able to fulfill goals.

The further objectives are primarily educational. The desire to teach in the kind of educational environment provided by the Catholic schools appears to be the predominant reason according to Benson and Guerra's study (1985) as I have already noted. The same study revealed that "Love of Teaching" ranked second among Catholic lay and non-Catholics. Profession related goals, therefore, seem to be the foremost reasons for the laity but not so for the religious teachers who placed the environment and love of teaching 5th and 4th respectively in priority.

Educational environment as a reason appears to be another broadly defined term incorporating many aspects. One of these is undoubtedly religious but what additional motivating forces derive from the environment? Purkey and Smith, (1983, 1985) identified four major characteristics that determine the academic environment: a) a sense of community; b) commonly shared goals and high expectations; c) collaborative planning and collegial relationships; d) order and discipline. A sense of commitment appears to be derived from these

factors which is important in school effectiveness (Chubb and Moe, 1988; Purkey and Smith, 1983). However, these factors are determined once the teacher is in place within a school. Commitment must, with some teachers, precede their work experience. What factors determine these expectations.

Some studies have shown that experiential factors often determine a person's decision. If we look at the educational training, we find that nearly one quarter of non-Catholic teachers graduated from a Catholic or other church affiliated college. In 1984, 62% of the lay teachers had attended a Catholic elementary school and 66% had attended Catholic high schools (Benson and Guerra, 1985). In addition, the report suggests a figure of 59% of those teachers reporting between one and twenty-five years teaching experience at the public school level. It seems clear that past experiences do have some bearing on expectations and decision making though it appears to be a rather minor one. In a 1985 report, Benson and Guerra determined that "experiences during adolescence" ranked 8th in priority out of twelve reasons for Catholic laity and 7th for religious. "Influence of a teacher" ranked a little higher for lay and religious teachers; 9th and 8th respectively but only 11th for non-Catholics.

Those characteristics already noted seem to increase the efficacy of teachers and therefore the effectiveness of the school with regards to academic achievement. Increased success seems to raise teacher morale and job satisfaction. This would be particularly true for those teachers whose primary goal or reason for working in a Catholic school is a love of teaching.

A sense of community is one of the factors that determine a school's environment. Catholic schools place a strong emphasis on the development of a school community (Bryk et al., !984). Yeager and his colleagues (1985) determined that 87% of high school principals ranked the building of a community among teachers, students, and parents as one of the top seven educational goals. Community is defined slightly differently in each of the major studies but in general a school community exists when there is agreement about the purpose of the school and the nature of the academic effort (Bryk and Driscoll, 1988). Coleman, (1987) suggested that there are two types of communities; a value community in which people share a common set of values, and a functional community in which the adults are closely linked. In this way, children are exposed to a common set of values and educational goals at all levels of their community. Coleman and Hoffer (1987) concluded that Catholic schools are generally functional communities while most public schools are not and this is precisely what makes the Catholic system effective.

Convey (1987) discussed the sources for the community in Catholic schools. These, he stated, derive from three sources; the religious nature which provides its mission, the commitment of the teachers who generally share a sense of mission and a receptiveness to the type of educational environment, and thirdly, the shared

values of the parents. Therefore, there is a much greater degree of agreement among the factions within a community and this lack of conflict has probably contributed to the success of Catholic schools (Hannaway and Abromowitz, 1985). Most public schools do not encourage the development of communities (Cusick, 1983) and tend to be large and bureaucratic (Abromowitz and Stackhouse, 1980). Benson and Guerra (1985) show that over two thirds of Catholic high school teachers rated community promotion as either "extremely important" or "very important" in their goals for teaching.

An additional part of the educational environment appears to be collegiality. Studies have indicated that this is important for three reasons. It promotes the level of community within the school (Purkey and Smith, 1985); it contributes to student's achievement; (Bryk and Driscoll, 1988) and it helps to instill a sense of teacher satisfaction (Kottkamp et al., 1988). There is considerable evidence that Catholic school faculties feel considerably more cohesiveness than public school teachers (McMillen, 1988; Chubb and Moe, 1988). Eighty percent of Catholic school teachers agreed with the statement that "colleagues share beliefs and values regarding school mission" compared to 72% of public school teachers. "Cooperative effort among staff" received an 85% agreement among the Catholic high school faculties with a comparative 67% for the public high schools.

Another aspect of the community within a Catholic school is the level of administrative support and recognition. Firestone and Rosenblum (1988) suggested that this support contributes to a teacher's efficacy by enhancing unity and cooperation. In the 1985 - 1986 Private School Survey, 81% of Catholic school teachers compared with 67% of Private school teachers agreed that the administration of their school was encouraging and supportive. Pallas (1988) reported that in general, there was a 59% positive response to principal leadership compared to 50% of the public school teachers.

Major studies also suggest that Catholic school teachers perceive a higher level of autonomy in school business than those in public schools. This autonomy appears to be more closely related to school room policy, curriculum and methods of teaching than involvement in school policy itself. Pallas (1988) reported that 81% of Catholic school teachers compared to 66% of their public school counterparts reported greater involvement in decision making. However, if we break down decision making into categories we find that while 90% of teachers believe they have considerable influence in the choice of teaching methods and over 70% in freedom of course content, less than a fifth believe they can affect the school's goals and curriculum (Benson et al., 1986).

"Love of teaching" ranked second in priority in Benson and Guerra's (1985) study of motivating forces for teaching in a Catholic school. Major studies seem to demonstrate that teachers' relationships with students

foster a sense of satisfaction with their teaching environment. These relationships could be heightened by class size which has steadily declined allowing a greater degree of personalized attention. Brigham (1989, 1990) reported that since 1965 the ratio of students to teachers has dropped from 37 to 20 students per teacher at the elementary level and from 19 to 14 at the secondary level.

Teachers also report that discipline and order are generally better in Catholic schools than in public schools (Chubb and Moe, 1988; Coleman et al., 1982), allowing a higher level of confidence in their work and therefore an ability to fulfill academic goals (Newman, Rutter and Smith, 1989). Teachers and principals are much less likely to encounter student behavioral problems or disruptive behavior in Catholic schools than those in public schools (Yeager, 1985) McMillen (1988) reported that teachers in public high schools were more likely to encounter problems that inhibit teaching. Tardiness or absence was five times more likely in public than Catholic schools while student misbehavior or substance abuse was reported to be three times more likely. Ciriello (1990) listed factors for teacher satisfaction. Two categories related to discipline rated very highly. "Discipline in my classes" and "Discipline in this school" received a 5.02 and a 5.04 respectively on a Likert scale with a 6.0 as very satisfactory. Discipline enables teachers to fulfill academic goals more efficiently.

Numerous studies have consistently shown that average scores in all subjects and for all age ranges are generally higher in Catholic schools than in public schools. (Lee, 1985, 1987; Lee and Stewart, 1989)

		Reading	
Grade Level	3rd	7th	11th
Catholic schools	40.1	53.2	60.0
Public schools	37.9	48.4	55.6
		Mathematics	
Grade Level	3rd	7th	11th
Catholic school	220.1	280.1	313.6
Public schools	211.6	265.6	302.7

(Lee, 1985, 1987; Lee and Stewart, 1989)

Coleman and Hoffer did a similar study at the high school level for 1980.

		Reading	
Grade Level	10th	12th	Gain
Catholic Schools	10.69	12.03	1.34
Public Schools	9.28	10.29	1.01
		Mathematics	
Catholic Schools	22.10	24.49	2.39
Public Schools	19.14	20.60	1.49

All of these factors determine a teacher's ability to perform their job effectively and thus increase their overall satisfaction at the catholic school level. Ciriello (1990) pointed out that teachers come to teaching with a strong commitment to serve and that their levels of satisfaction are largely determined by the appropriate and effective use of their abilities. In her 1990 report, Ciriello concluded that Catholic school teachers were generally satisfied with internal factors of their work. Internal factors relate to their ability to fulfill their professional goals. The mean overall score for these factors was 5.06 on a 6.0 Likert scale. External factors were divided into two areas; student interactions and working conditions. Although levels of satisfaction for both of these tended to be lower than for internal factors - 4.81 and 5.02 respectively - teachers are generally satisfied with their work situation.

One other set of factors seems to determine teachers decisions to work in Catholic schools. These are practical reasons and appear to be related to job site and compatibility with other commitments. Ciriello (1988) reported reasons that teachers emphasized such as extra money, unavailability of other jobs, compatibility with family schedules and job site. On a Likert scale of 4.0 measuring commitment, "Desire to work in the home parish" and "school is close to my home" received 2.53 and 2.66 respectively. In Benson and Guerra's study (1985) the practical reasons of "means of gaining experience" and "only teaching position open to me" ranked four and three out of twelve respectively in order of priority for non Catholic teachers. For the Catholic laity, the same motives ranked eight and six while for the religious teachers the former ranked ninth with the latter having no primary value. Practical reasons clearly have an influence upon choices for teaching locations but they appear to be a secondary motivation.

In conclusion, the reasons that teachers place greatest emphasis on for choosing Catholic schools appear to fall into mission related, profession related, job related and experiential categories. The religious nature of these schools provides a work arena which is conducive to the individual's values and beliefs though those aspects of religious teachings are given varying degrees of importance according to affiliation.

Profession related reasons emphasized those aspects of Catholic schools that heightened satisfaction and efficacy. These included the community, discipline, administrative support and freedom of teaching methods and curriculum.

Job related reasons such as job site and schedule compatibility were given greater emphasis by some teachers than by others though they seem to be of far less importance.

Experiential reasons are related to education and prior work experience. Catholic schooling and teaching at the public level seemed to influence decisions although the evidence by which this is measured seemed to be inconclusive. Finally, practical reasons have a role in teacher's decisions but the level of importance placed on these aspects correspond to a lesser degree with affiliation to the catholic church.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to determine why teachers choose to work in Catholic schools.

Procedures.

The "Catholic School Teachers' Professional Choices Questionnaire" was devised to measure the reasons that teachers choose to work in Catholic schools. Some of the questions were revised editions of those asked in Benson and Guerra's 1985 study, "Sharing the Faith: The Beliefs and Values of Catholic High School Teachers," and from Maria J. Ciriello's 1990 report, "Catholic School Teachers' Views of Job Satisfaction and Work Circumstances and their Relationship to Commitment."

The questionnaire was divided into two main sections consisting of a total of forty two questions. The first fourteen of these gathered demographic data. The second section was organized to determine specific reasons that teachers chose Catholic schools.

The twenty eight questions of this second section were divided into categories that related to religious, professional, experiential and practical reasons.

The questionnaire was distributed to the sixty five teachers at five Chicago Catholic schools. They were asked to respond by checking the appropriate box that corresponded with the degree of importance they placed on each question. The population for this study is comprised of five principals and forty nine teachers from four Chicago Catholic elementary schools and one Catholic high school. The total teaching faculty for these schools is sixty five with a student body of approximately 1500. The majority of respondents are female (93%) outnumbering the males by 12.5 to one Forty seven participants are Caucasian comprising 87% of the population. Six Hispanic teachers and one African American make up the remaining sample. The study

revealed that the largest segment of teachers (33%) were between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-four. Fifteen percent were under the age of twenty-five; thirteen percent were between thirty-four and forty-four; twenty percent were between forty-four and fifty-four while nineteen percent disclosed being older than fifty-four. Religious women made up 22% of the study while Catholic lay men and women comprised 65% of the population. Non-Catholic lay men and women made up 13% of the population. A Masters degree was reported as being the highest level of educational attainment for 41%. Of the sample, 52% denoted having received their undergraduate degree from a Catholic affiliated institution.

This study includes the available responses from a possible sample of sixty five teachers and administrators in five Chicago Catholic schools. Fifty four completed questionnaires were returned representing an 83% response.

The results of the questionnaire were then tabulated by the percentage of each group of teachers who responded to the "very important" category. These were analyzed to determine the reasons that each gave highest priority to. The Chi Square was used to determine the statistical significance (.05) of the responses.

Findings of the Study.

The findings of the study as shown by the data in the table demonstrates that the reasons given by teachers for working in Catholic schools, follow similar patterns to those exemplified in previous research concerning this issue. By dividing the population into three groups - Religious, Catholic lay, and Non-Catholic - it was evident that different emphasis was placed upon the four categories of questions. In compiling the data, only the compared "very important" influence category was tabulated.

With regard to the first eight questions that dealt with religion as an influence in professional choices, the responses were clearly significant. Two of the questions received a 100% response from the religious teachers while the same questions elicited an 80% and a 77% from Catholic lay and non-Catholic lay respectively. Only questions numbers 5 and 8 did not follow the pattern of descending order of importance from religious, Catholic lay to non-Catholic lay teachers. These two questions dealt with the issues of helping children develop faith and the belief that teaching is God's choice for their lives. With both questions, the non-Catholic teachers responded that these were two areas that were very important. This group checked very important 20% and 26% more than the Catholic laity. However, in all eight questions regarding religion as an influence,

the religious teachers gave them considerably greater significance than either of the two other categories. This finding certainly corresponds to previous research and does not appear surprising given the nature of the school.

The second category of questions dealt with professional and educational goals and covered areas dealing with school environment, areas of emphasis in teaching, and perceptions of alternative school systems. The "Love of teaching" received a 92%, 83% and an 86% from the three categories of teachers respectively suggesting a considerable commitment to the craft of teaching. As the table shows, there is only a significant difference between the Religious and theother two groups. There is no apparent significance between the two sets of lay teachers. However, the reasons for teaching seem to be determined in some ways by affiliation to each of the categories. For example, teaching excellence in academic skills received only a 58% response from the religious teachers while for Catholic lay and non-Catholic lay the responses were 71% and 86%. Stimulating intellectual curiosity and critical thinking skills was given the greatest emphasis by non-Catholic teachers (86%) and the lowest by Catholic laity (77%). The promotion of tolerance, morality, compassion and justice issues was very important for more of the teachers than any other single question with 100% of the religious group giving this subject great significance, in terms of reasons, compared with 80% of the Catholic laity and 86% of the non-Catholic teachers. Teachers as a career then, is clearly of major importance to our three groups. The emphasis that each places on areas of classroom concentration appears to correspond with their views on the question of religion. teaching excellence in academic skills is far more important for non-Catholic teachers than for their religious counterparts - 86% compared to 58%.

Teaching appears to relate far more to the traditional notions of academic education for non-Catholic teachers. this is evidenced by their responses to the question regarding commitment to Catholic education. An extremely considerable discrepancy was revealed by the results which showed that 92% of the religious teachers considered this very important compared to 46% of Catholic lay and only 14% of the non-Catholic laity. The results of these three sets of data are very significant at the .05 level. However, while Catholic education may not be of primary concern to the non-Catholic group, religion clearly is. This is demonstrated by the responses to the question regarding a belief that teaching is God's choice for their lives. Fifty seven percent of the non-Catholic teachers answered that this was a very important reason compared to only 31% of the Catholic laity. This might account for the great emphasis that the non-Catholic teachers give to such issues as tolerance, compassion, morality and the opportunity to help children develop faith.

Another subgroup of five questions within this second category dealt with the nature of the school itself. These cover the areas of the teaching environment, a sense of community, shared beliefs and values of the faculty,

administrative support and the ability to initiate teaching methods and curriculum. The responses to these questions follow much the same pattern as the religion section with the religious teachers placing greater importance on these areas than the Catholic laity who in turn answered more positively than the non-Catholic teachers. The discrepancy between the scores, however, was not as pronounced as in the initial eight questions. The teaching environment was given a very important rating by 83% of the religious teachers and a 63% and 57% by the Catholic lay and non-Catholic teachers respectively suggesting a significance only with the religious group.

A sense of community was considered of great significance for 100% of the religious teachers with a meaningful 74% and 71% suggesting considerable importance placed on it by the other two groups though significant lying only with the religious group as opposed to the other two. The question related to the shared beliefs and values of the faculty received less emphasis, though in similar proportions to the question of community. Once again, the religious men and women provided the greatest percentage of very important responses (75%) while Catholic and non-Catholics gave a 48% and 43% respectively. These latter two questions could be viewed as relating to the religious nature of the school. A sense of community is not Catholic or religion specific but it does imply a shared sense of what the school and its objectives are. Shared beliefs and values, alternatively, is more religion specific and would be applied to support the beliefs of Catholicism. Surprisingly, only 75% of religious teachers believe this to be very important while only 48% and 43% of the Catholics and non-Catholics give this a similar rating. It could be suggested that there is an acknowledgment by an ever increasing number of lay teachers that the necessity for shared beliefs is incongruous with the nature of Catholic schools today.

The findings of the last two questions within this subgroup are more professionally directed and receive very similar levels of emphasis. For example, the question that asks how important freedom to put into effect one's own teaching methods and course content, receives a 75% "very important" rating by religious teachers as compared to 71% from both Catholic and non-Catholic alike. Professional reasons appear to be of far more importance to non-Catholic teachers than for the religious. For Catholic teachers, the discrepancy between the two categories of percentages is less although professional reasons appear to take precedence. For religious teachers, the professional and religious reasons are given very comparable emphasis. Interestingly, the least sinificance between the three sets of data was revealed for this group of questions suggesting that while important for our three groups, they are not significantly different especially for the Catholic and non-Catholic teachers.

The third group of questions is related to experiential reasons. Only two questions probe this subject and the findings reveal that they play a minor role in reasons for choosing Catholic schools. The influence of a former teacher is given a 42% "very important" rating by religious teachers but only 26% by Catholic laity and 14% by non-Catholics. Experiences and memories of school during adolescence reveal that 28% of Catholic teachers 25% of religious teachers find this very important but none of the non-Catholic teachers are in agreement. Presumably, the religious and Catholic teachers are far more likely to have attended a Catholic elementary or high school and would thus have remembrances from which to draw reasons to pursue a career in Catholic schools.

The final group of questions was concerned with practical reasons. As with the experiential, practicalities appear to be secondary in importance for choosing Catholic schools although the results reveal that these have a greater significance for non-Catholic than for Catholic lay teachers. Religious teachers seem to place the least emphasis on this group of questions. Salaries and benefits, for example, are considered "very important" as a reason by 17%, 3% and 14% of religious, Catholic lay, and non-Catholic teachers respectively. "Means of gaining teaching experience" received the same degree of relevance for religious teachers as did salaries and benefits but for 34% of Catholic lay and 28% of non-Catholics, this was of major importance. The only teaching job available was given as an important reason by 17% of religious teachers, 14% of Catholic lay and 28% of non-Catholics. This does not reveal, however, whether the teachers would accept a position within another Catholic school or a different educational system if given the choice. The image or experiences of other school systems receives the greatest rating from 28% of non-Catholic teachers compared to only 8% of Catholic and 0% from religious teachers. This suggests that more non-Catholic teachers have worked in other school systems and that a considerable amount of those have chosen to work in Catholic schools based on those experiences. When asked how important the comparisons, or perceptions of discipline in Catholic versus other schools are, the exact percentage of non-Catholic teachers answered that it was very important (28%) and in response to Catholic school levels of discipline as a factor in teaching effectiveness, 43% of the same group gave it the highest rating. Alternatively, 50% of religious teachers placed high importance on both of these questions with Catholic laity providing a 26% and a 31% respectively. Given the responses to experiences of other school systems, these latter percentages by religious and Catholic faculty seem less based on experience than on perceptions which are as valid with regards to reasons for choosing a work place.

In conclusion, the responses that teachers in all three categories gave the greatest importance to were the questions related to religious and professional reasons. Experiential and practical reasons were over all rated

lower in levels of importance. This supports other major findings in studies conducted in this field and seems to correspond with the slight fluctuations of this generalization. Over all we must reject the null hypothesis since a significance is noted - to some degree within our categories - for twenty-three of the twenty-eight questions. Of the five questions with little or no significance, four were in the professional reasons category and one in the practical group.The findings demonstrate that teaching as a profession is the major reason over all and that the nature of a Catholic school provides an environment in which personal faith issues can be developed and one which is efficacious to classroom goals. The importance of this study lies not only in the reasons that teachers choose to work in Catholic schools but also why they do not. Clearly, salary as a reason is significant since benefits are notoriously low. Reasons that teachers leave or choose not to work in Catholic schools for could be reexamined and possibly rectified to enhance teacher satisfaction and effectiveness. The reasons that teachers choose Catholic schools are clearly beneficial within an educational environment. With closer examination of some of the issues dealt with in this study, and perhaps with specific emphasis on elementary versus high schools, attention could be paid to the motivational forces that draw teachers to the Catholic environment which could possibly be applied to other school systems.

Responses to the "Catholic School Teachers' Professional Choices Questionnaire"

A Religious B Catholic Lay C Non Catholic

%= Percentage of respondents in each group who answered with the "very important" category.

***=Connects points of significance for A and B and for B and C
**= Connects points of significance for B and C or A and B only
*= Connects points of significance for A and C only
****=Connects points of significance for A to B and A to C only

	A %	B%	C%
1. Religious faith as an influence in your life	100***	80	57
2. Commitment to Catholic education	92***	46	14
3. The religious nature of the school	83***	43	28
4. Teaching as a mission	83***	71	57
5. The opportunity to help children develop faith	92***	51	71
6. Opportunity to work in an environment that supports your own faith.	83****	51	43
7. Opportunity to share values	100***	77	43
8. Belief that teaching is God's choice for your life	75***	31	57
9. Love of teaching	92	83	86
10. The teaching environment of the school	83****	63	57
11. Teaching excellence in academic skills	58***	71	86
12. Stimulating intellectual curiosity and critical thinking skills	83	77	86
13. Promoting compassion, tolerance, morality and justice issues	100****	80	86
14. A sense of community in your school	100****	74	71
15. Shared beliefs and values of the faculty	75****	48	43
16. Administrative support and recognition	67*	63	57
17. The freedom to put into effect your own teaching methods and course content	75	71	71
18. Influence of a former teacher(s) of yours	42***	26	14

19. Experiences and memories of school during adolescence	25*	28*	0
20. How important are the comparisons between the educational standards of Catholic vs. other schools?	42***	26	14
21. How important is the comparison, or your perception, of discipline in Catholic vs. other schools?	50****	26	28
22. How important do you think the discipline levels in Catholic schools is to your effectiveness as a teacher?	50***	31	43
23. Salary and benefits of Catholic schools.	17***	3	14
24. Means of gaining teaching experience	17****	34	28
25 This was the only teaching job available	17*	14**	28
26. The school's schedule is compatible to other commitments. (e.g. family, college, part-time work)	8	8	14
27. The image or experiences of other school systems	0***	8	28
28. The school is close to your home.	17***	3	14

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

1. Abromowitz and Stackhouse
   National Institute for Education. 1980
2. Benson, Peter L.; Guerra, Michael J. "Sharing the Faith: The beliefs and Values of Catholic High School Teachers." 1985
3. Boyer, Ernest L.. "A Report on Secondary Education in America."
   New York. Harper and Row, 1983 p. 15
4. Brigham, Frederick H, Jr. and Others.
   The Catholic School and Society: Catholic Schools for the 21st Century 1991 (Vol. IV)
5. Brook, Barbara, L. "Profile of the Beginning Teacher"
   Momentum: Nov. 1990 p. 54 - 57
6. Bryk, Holland, Lee, and Carriedo.
   Effective Catholic Schools: An Exploration. 1984
7. Ciriello, Maria J. Catholic School Teachers' Views of Job Satisfaction and Work Circumstances and Their Relationship to Commitment. 1990
8. Coleman, Hoffer and Others.
   High School and Beyond. 1987
9. Draina, Lois king "Master Teacher Plan is Feasible for Catholic Schools"
   Momentum, Sept. 1984 p. 46 - 47
10. Governal, Mary Ann. "Meshing Community Values and Catholic Schools."
    Momentum: Feb. 1991 p. 58 -61
11. Guerra, Michael, and Others. Catholic Schools for the 21st Century
    Executive Summary, 1992
12. Heft, James; Rock, Carleen.
    The Catholic Identity of Catholic Schools: Catholic Schools for the 21st Century 1991 (Vol. III)
13. Himes, Michael. "The mission of the Church and Educational Leadership."
    Momentum. Feb. 1988 p. 47 - 49
14. Kelly, Francis, D., Ed
    What Makes a School Catholic? 1991
15. Lee and Stewart

National Assessment of Educational Progress. 1989

16. Manno, Bruno, V. "Those Who Would be Catholic School Principals: Their Recruitment, Preparation and Evaluation" 1985

17. Mc Dermott, Edwin, J. "Distinctive Qualities of the Catholic School" NCEA Keynote Series No. 1 1985

18. Murdick, Olin, J. "Catholic Schools Revisited" Momentum. Sept. 1989 p. 7 - 10

19. O'Brien, Stephen, J, Ed.; Mc Brien, Margaret, Ed. Personal Issues and the Catholic School Administrator 1986

20. O'Brien, Stephen J. Mixed Messages. 1987

21. O'Brien, David, J. "The Dual Dimension of Teaching as Catholics" Momentum Dec. 1986

22. O'Brien, David J. "The Dual Dimension of Teaching as Catholics" Momentum. Dec. 1986 p. 16 - 19

23. Ozar, Lorraine, A. "To Recruit or to Retain" Momentum. Nov. 1990, p43 - 45

24. Reilly, John J. "Is In-Servive of Service" Momentum. Nov. 1990 p.10 -11

25. Yeager, Benson, Guerra, and Manno. The Catholic High School: A National Portrait. 1985